CORRECTED TRANSCRIPT

Barry 1978 Campaign Oral History Project
Interview with Lucie Ogilvie
Conducted on September 25, 2018 by Betty King

Lucie Ogilvie was interviewed about her late husband, Dr. Phil Ogilvie, who was an important part of the campaign staff of Marion Barry's 1978 campaign. Before coming to Washington, Phil was a zoo director in Oklahoma City, Portland Oregon and Toronto. He served in the Barry administration, establishing the DC archives. He also researched and wrote extensively on DC history.

BK: This is Betty King. Today is September 25, 2018 and I'm talking to Lucie Ogilvie. Her husband who is unhappily not with us any longer was Phil Ogilvie who was very instrumental in the 1978 campaign for Marion Barry. When did you and Phil come to Washington?

LO: I believe it was 1977. We came from Canada. Phil had been the zoo director at the Toronto Zoo, but he had also, years prior to that, been instrumental in developing the federal regulations regarding zoos, thought he would probably get a position with the Carter administration because of that. When that did not come through, because he'd always been interested in politics, he ran for the ANC [Advisory Neighborhood Commission] position. We were up on Capitol Hill then, and won that, and somewhere along the line met Marion. I'm not sure where and when that took place, but he liked Marion. He always liked the underdog anyway. Yeah, really wanted to go to work for Marion.

BK: Was he hugely confident that we were going to win, or not?

LO: I don't know whether he was confident, but he always loved the fight and the challenge, and he knew about elections. He's always worked in political elections since he was a

teenager, I think, in California. Phil was from California. And so as he explained it to me – and, of course, he worked with Ivanhoe closely then, too, and the two of them knew how to play the game and knew that if you could get the first position at the top of the ballot. A lot of people just punch that one because it is the first one and they wanted Marion to have that position, and the way to get that, I can't remember, was Marion on the second or third position on the ballot?

BK: I don't remember.

LO: Yeah. I don't either, but it must have been like the second, and they wanted very much for him to be the number one slot, and the way you do that is you can challenge the signatures people got to be on the ballot, and if you didn't have enough signatures, you were off the ballot.

BK: Oh, so the person who got the first place was one of the marginal candidates?

LO: It was, remember, James Clark. Remember James Clark?

BK: No, I don't.

LO: Oh, dear.

BK: I'm sure you're right.

LO: Yeah, I know I'm right. (Laughter.) James Clark. For some reason I want to say he was in the pharmacy at one of the hospitals or something. In any case, I guess they picked it by lottery or however you got your position on the ballot, by lottery, and he got the number one spot. And so Phil, I would have thought Ivanhoe was in on this as well.

BK: Oh, he would have been.

LO: Said we need to challenge his signatures. And so there was a meeting, an evening meeting, I remember, and I remember that *The Washington Post* was there, local TV

cameras were there, because this is all recorded, and they challenged Clark's signatures enough that he did not have enough to remain on the ballot which moved Marion up the first place.

BK: Oh, wonderful.

LO: Well, it wasn't wonderful because Clark, then enraged, picked up a heavy, heavy metal chair, not a folding metal chair, one of these solid metal chairs, and hit Phil in the head with it.

BK: No.

LO: Oh, yes. And Phil thought that one of the TV camera lights had exploded. No, (laughs) it was his head, and I remember being called at home. I was at home through all this. And Ivanhoe, I remember, called me and said, "We're sending a car. We're grabbing you. We're going over to the hospital," a little hospital that was near us on Capitol Hill, like Massachusetts and 8th Street, or something. I don't remember that.

And Ivanhoe was very upset that that's where they were taking Phil because he wanted him, I guess, at Howard because they were so used to handling emergencies, like automobile accidents and shootings and that sort of thing, but, anyway, Phil went to a little hospital there, turned out he was all right, though I think his eyesight was affected, quite frankly, for the rest of his life.

BK: Really?

LO: Right. And when it came to court, who's that man I can't stand? I asked you about this one time. Who was the lawyer then, U. S. Attorney then, Giovanni, Gia-something? [It was Joe DiGenova]. Yeah, we talked about this once; I can't think of his name. But the one who was very, very anti-Marion. I don't know if you remember. And his claim,

when it went to court, essentially boiled down to, anybody who works for Marion Barry gets what they deserve.

I mean, that was really, yeah, I mean, that was really the thing. But Clark got a slap on the wrist, as I recall, and we wanted *The Washington Post* or the TV people, but I think it was the *Post,* to come and testify what had happened, and they wouldn't do it. They said they don't take political sides on things. Well, this wasn't exactly taking a political side, but I do remember being really disgusted by that.

BK: Yeah. And then on September 12, the night of the primary, he was inside, wasn't he, in the Board of Elections monitoring the –

LO: As I remember, yeah. I mean, because what I remember is, I couldn't have any access to him. That's what I remember. (Laughter.)

BK: You were mugged that night, I gather?

LO: I was. I came home from work, rushed into the house – we were living on Capitol Hill then, 7th and A Northeast. I remember that and I was rushing, I guess, to get the subway. We didn't have a car, so I must have been rushing to the subway to go down to the hotel.

BK: For the victory party.

LO: For the victory party, and three young kids crossed the street. I would say maybe there was a twelve-year-old, an eleven-year old, and a nine-year-old, that young, and asked me for the time. Always be careful of that. I stopped to look at my wrist, because I didn't have a wrist watch, but I stopped to look at my – and they snatched my purse, and as I turned to grab it back, the nine-year-old was holding a gun on me, yeah. So I rushed to a neighbor's house, and the cops came.

BK: Oh, dear.

LO: Yeah. But I went on to the party, and then suddenly realized that I didn't have a purse and I didn't have any money (laughter), and how was I going to get home? And I don't remember how I got home, but I did.

BK: I'm sure that one of us made sure that you got home safely.

LO: So, we did.

BK: And then afterwards, Phil went to work for the Barry administration, Office of the Secretary, I believe.

LO: What I remember is his belief that the District of Columbia should have their own archives for their own history; that we were always sort of, well, not first-rate citizens, that we were always under the wing of the federal government and that's where all our papers were. He felt very strongly that we should have our own, and I don't remember who would have okayed that, but in the end, he convinced them that that's indeed what we should have, and then went looking for buildings. There wasn't a lot of money to fund this thing. And we had the old horse stables, oh, golly, what is the name of that, like in the Shaw neighborhood. I'm trying to remember where it was. Were you ever in the –

BK: I was never there, no.

LO: It's really an amazing building because it's where they kept all the firefighting equipment, all the old carriages, and so you would rush into this big building, there was a huge open doorway, rush in and up ramps. It was just where they kept the carriages and the horses down below, so it was this heavy thick cement building, and brick on the outside as I recall, but great for keeping records.

BK: And all that heavy stuff. There was plenty of –

LO: Yeah. And you could regulate the temperature and what have you, and there were moving walls. It was really quite an exciting time. And Phil went about gathering up stuff that, to his way of thinking should be to everybody's way of thinking, belonged to us.

BK: It was, you know, that until home rule came, when was it, '73, the District Government was an agency of the federal government, so, you know, all the records were scrambled together, but he did an outstanding job in establishing the archive.

LO: He did. And Boss Shepherd's, I think, the portrait, he uncovered, I don't know where it was, but we had that for a while, and then the statue of Boss Shepherd, as well, and he did a lot of research and writing on Boss Shepherd; I do remember that. Yeah.

BK: Well, it was an exciting summer, the summer of 1978.

LO: It was great.

BK: It was remarkable.

LO: Yeah.

BK: Well, since Phil was not able to part of our oral history, I really appreciate your having filled us in a little bit on –

LO: Oh, well, it's a joy.

BK: – the role that he played because he was very important, you know, for many years in the Barry administration.

LO: He was loyal to Marion to the very end. All the way to the end, I remember that.

BK: Great. Thank you very much, Lucie.

LO: Thank you.

[End of Interview]